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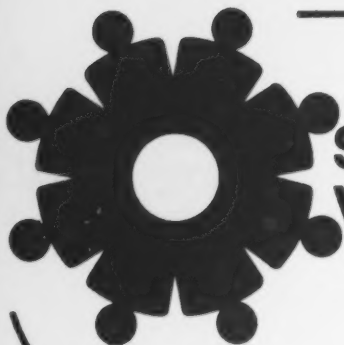
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ABSTRACT

This report explores the extent to which equity in vocational programs is afforded targeted populations in Minnesota--the handicapped and disadvantaged, adults in need of training and retraining, single parents, displaced homemakers, incarcerated criminal offenders, and participants in sex equity programs. Following an introduction, section II considers three aspects of equity: barriers to enrolling, barriers to learning, and outcomes. Section III contains profiles of 11 secondary and postsecondary students who represent the targeted populations. These profiles are either a summary of one individual or a composite of the experiences of more than one student, with a focus on equity issues. Section IV focuses on services that are specifically designated to serve targeted populations or that directly promote equity in vocational education. The services are available within the state system but vary from institution to institution. Section V makes eight recommendations regarding marketing and recruitment, career counseling, job placement services, commitment to serve targeted populations, quality of life and learning, and coordination with other agencies. (YLB)

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State Council on Vocational Technical Education

STATE OF MINNESOTA

ED 297173

Equity for Targeted Populations in Vocational Technical Education

June 1987

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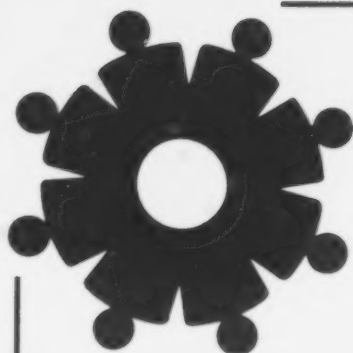
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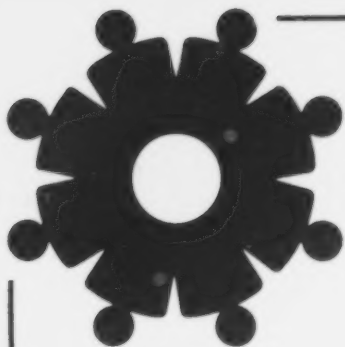
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EQUITY FOR TARGETED POPULATIONS
IN VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL EDUCATION

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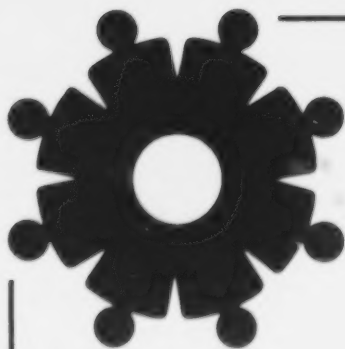
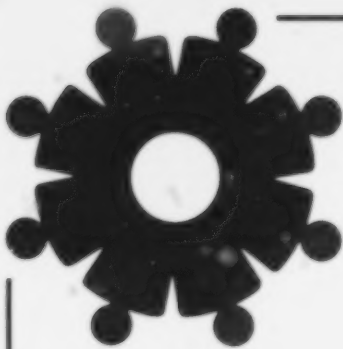


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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Equity in vocational technical education suggests just and fair treatment for all students and is not to be confused with equal treatment in every instance. Nonetheless, when students are alike in educationally-relevant ways, they should be treated equally. On the other hand, when students are different in educationally-relevant ways, equity suggests--in order for individual differences to be addressed--that they should be treated according to their needs.

In this report, the State Council on Vocational Technical Education explores the extent to which equity in vocational programs is afforded targeted populations, namely the handicapped and disadvantaged, adults in need of training and retraining, single parents, displaced homemakers, incarcerated criminal offenders, and participants in programs designed to eliminate sex bias and stereotyping in vocational technical education. Each of these groups is represented in the profiles of students and graduates of secondary and postsecondary programs presented in this report.

At the on-set, the Council commends the State Board of Education and the State Board of Vocational Technical Education for their commitments and sustained efforts to provide targeted populations with equitable opportunities in vocational technical education. It is evident that vocational programs have a positive impact on the lives of many individuals from targeted populations.

Equity is not a simple matter, however. Rather, it presents complex issues and requires attention to individual circumstances. This is brought into sharp focus through the 11 student profiles. Indeed, equity issues perhaps can best be understood when they are explored through the eyes of students who are representative of targeted populations.

Not only do the 11 student profiles reveal the complexities of the equity question but also serve to renew and increase individual and institutional sensitivities to the educationally-relevant characteristics of targeted populations. What the profiles achieve is important in furthering the objective, shared by the Council and both Boards, to have all students treated in a fair and just manner in order that they have educational opportunities that lead to meaningful and useful lives.

Vocational technical education at both the secondary and postsecondary levels provides programs and services designed to promote equity for all students. In reviewing programs and services that are designed to promote equity, particularly for targeted populations, the Council found evidence of a substantial commitment on the part of both Boards. However, programs and services often vary from one educational institution to another and some programs are generally not provided at all institutions, whether high schools, secondary cooperative centers, or technical institutes. In some instances, a specified service may be available at only one site. Furthermore, the level of a particular service at an institution may vary from one year to another. Some funds are made available to some or all institutions for a particular program, while other programs are funded on the basis of grant applications and may represent a composite of federal, state, local, and private sector funds. Grants not only reflect needs identified by individual institutions but also may be indicative of the values of the leadership as well as the priority-setting processes at the local level.

To be able to lead meaningful and useful lives is a real concern of the students whose experiences are told in this report. Of course, not all of the equity concerns highlighted in the profiles can be resolved by educational institutions. This does not mean, however, that either institutions or their staffs should not be aware of the obstacles that deter targeted populations from conceiving and reaching educational objectives. All staff need to be aware if for no other reason than not to make the problems often faced by targeted populations even more difficult to overcome. Moreover, there are equity issues that educational institutions can and must continue to address in a forthright manner. Some of these concerns are the focus of eight recommendations proposed by the Council.

Marketing and Recruitment

Two of the Council's recommendations fall under marketing and recruitment. The first recommendation speaks to the enhancement of these efforts, while the second one addresses the need for high school guidance counselors to be better versed about the value of vocational programs.

First, the Council recommends that the marketing of vocational programs and the recruitment of students

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be enhanced on all fronts. Both Boards should continue to work toward informing all current and potential students, including elementary school children, of the availability and benefits of vocational course offerings in Minnesota's high schools, secondary cooperative centers, and technical institutes. Secondary vocational educators, together with their program advisory committees, must play a central role in informing students and parents, as well as school board members, administrators, counselors, and other teachers.

Regarding postsecondary programs, the State Board of Vocational Technical Education should augment its efforts to recruit students from all strata of the population and pay particular attention to the recruitment of students from targeted populations. The Board should provide secondary guidance counselors with current, comprehensive, useable information about programs and services for targeted populations available throughout the state. Both the Minnesota Technical Institute System and members of targeted populations would stand to benefit.

Concerning guidance counselors, the Council suggests in its second recommendation that high school guidance counselors must become more aware of the benefits and potential outcomes for students who enroll in vocational programs. These counselors have a direct, professional responsibility to keep themselves knowledgeable and to use the information to meet the unique needs of each student. Two other groups have a direct responsibility for the preparation and professional development of guidance counselors. Minnesota's colleges and universities that prepare guidance counselors must provide a balance between emphasis on academic and vocational guidance. Further, professional guidance organizations must actively promote continuing education in both academic and vocational guidance for their members.

These two recommendations reflect the Council's finding that current efforts in the marketing of programs and the recruitment of students are not consistently effective on all fronts, especially in terms of targeted populations. Three issues emerge from the study.

First, high school personnel are often unaware of the benefits for students who enroll in vocational technical education. This is evident in the profile of the female student who was pursuing woodworking at the secondary level and felt resistance from non-vocational school personnel regarding her choice of

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professions. In this case, the resistance focused on the issue of a woman pursuing a nontraditional vocation. Students are also often discouraged from enrolling in vocational courses if they are considered "college material" (Copa, Pihl, Scholl, Ernst, Rehm, & Copa, 1986). There is an apparent need for all high school personnel, especially guidance counselors, to be knowledgeable about vocational offerings and outcomes as well as academic offerings. Lack of support for vocational technical education on the part of nonvocational school personnel creates barriers for student enrollment.

Second, high school guidance counselors do not have available current, comprehensive, readily useable information about programs and services for targeted populations offered throughout the state. Services vary from one technical institute to another and it is difficult to be knowledgeable about where needs can best be met for a particular student. To better understand the extent to which guidance counselors have knowledge regarding these services, a telephone survey was conducted at rural, urban, and suburban high schools. It was found that counselors are generally unaware of services for targeted populations provided at the technical institutes in Minnesota. Some counselors are knowledgeable about services at nearby technical institutes but are unfamiliar with services statewide. Counselors begin making telephone contacts to ask about support services as students with special needs become known to them. One counselor relied heavily on a reference which is more than five years old for this information. Counselors also rely on support from representatives from the Division of Rehabilitation Services of the Department of Jobs and Training and special education departments at the local high schools. One counselor said the information was probably somewhere in the numerous publications he had received, but he did not have time to go through all the information. This lack of a brief and comprehensive publication may be keeping students from becoming knowledgeable about and, therefore, enrolling in vocational programs which would best meet their needs.

Third, marketing and student recruitment information have not consistently reached the individuals represented in the student profiles. Of the 13 students interviewed for this report, only four students became aware of the vocational programs directly through marketing and recruitment efforts. Most students learned of programs through friends or relatives. One student found out about a program

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through a friend who asked her to care for her child while she completed an entrance test. It is recognized that reaching targeted populations through marketing often requires increased resources and expanded informational channels with other organizations.

Career Counseling

The Council's third recommendation calls for Minnesota's technical institutes consistently to advise potential and new students about prevailing and projected job placement rates and wage scales relative to students' financial needs and expectations once they have graduated. This information is important to students in making educational decisions. Nonetheless, the evidence does not suggest that this information is always provided. Thus, the Council asserts that the technical institutes should always advise students and provide printed information about job placement rates and wage scales relative to the jobs they seek to hold.

Generally, students perceived the information they received about potential job placement rates and salary as it relates to their financial need as helpful and realistic. One student said, "there were no surprises." A woman who was a single parent was encouraged to consider accounting rather than a graphic arts program, because it was unlikely she could support herself and her children with the graphic arts degree she wanted to pursue. Looking back, this individual appreciated the guidance.

One of the students did not look for a job after completing a food service program, because her fellow students were not finding jobs with the salary she needed to support herself. She is now enrolled in a community college with hopes of receiving an adequate salary after completing a two-year degree in human services. It is likely this student would have benefited from information about potential job placement rates and salary before she enrolled in the program.

Job Placement Services

In its fourth recommendation, the Council urges the State Board of Vocational Technical Education to evaluate the current policies and practices regarding job placement services offered in the technical institutes. The evaluation should focus on effectiveness and fairness for all students and particularly for those who are members of targeted populations. The

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Council poses four questions to be included in the evaluation.

1. Do teachers have the skills that qualify them to provide job placement services? If not, what provisions are made to teach the necessary skills? Also, what additional opportunities are provided through which teachers increase and refine their skills?

2. How do teachers handle placement of students in the lower half of their class when an unsatisfactory placement might affect future job placements with a particular employer?

3. Do teachers advise students to take low paying jobs in order to sustain high program placement rates?

4. How does the perceived likelihood of successfully placing a student in a job influence the decision to admit a student?

The students interviewed had differing experiences regarding job placement at the technical institutes. One student received a list of companies from the instructor where students had been previously placed. That was the extent of the assistance she received. One student was hired where he previously had served an internship. Another student would have been able to find employment with the help of the technical institute in either a small town or urban setting.

A stated goal of the State Board of Vocational Technical Education is to make employment opportunities available to all technical institute students. This may be an impossible task. Students do need job-seeking and job-keeping skills, as well as knowledge about possible employment opportunities. Follow-up reports for students who graduated from Minnesota's technical institutes in 1984 and 1985 indicate 33 and 28 percent of students, respectively, received assistance from technical institute personnel in securing their first job. The remainder of students received assistance from private employment agencies, relatives or friends, the state employment agency, or they found employment on their own (Minnesota Student Information System, 1985, 1986). The majority of students do not secure their first job with assistance from the technical institute. It is not clear whether students choose to use other sources to secure employment, or if the technical institutes do not have the resources to help students find employment.

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Commitment to Serve Targeted Populations

Service to targeted populations requires a strong commitment and benefits the persons served as well as society as a whole. It is a good business decision (Buxton, 1986). The Council takes particular note of the efforts made by the Boards to meet the educationally-relevant needs of vocational students in Minnesota's high schools, secondary cooperative centers, and technical institutes. Evidence gathered in this study also reveals commitment on the part of the educational institutions and their staffs. The commitment is commendable. In its fifth and sixth recommendations, the Council addresses the need for renewed and continuing commitment to meet the needs of targeted populations.

In its fifth recommendation, the Council urges the Boards to continue providing staff development activities for vocational staffs to help them understand better the needs and characteristics of targeted populations. In the sixth recommendation, the Council asks the State Board of Vocational Education to renew its commitment to increase pre-vocational services in the technical institutes.

Meeting the needs of targeted populations is mandated by the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984 and is an essential part of the concept of equity. Some students may need unequal treatment in order to benefit from an educational program (Plihal, Ernst, & Rehm, 1986). It needs to be clearly stated that vocational technical education cannot meet all the needs of all students. Rather, the major focus should be on students' educational needs. However, very often students have difficulty meeting educational goals because of the impact of other aspects of their lives. It is important, therefore, that vocational personnel be sensitive to and understand the impact of various aspects of students' lives on their ability to accomplish educational goals.

The students interviewed indicated they had received varying degrees of support and understanding from instructors. Some instructors contributed to the sense of frustration and added to the students' feeling of being overwhelmed while other instructors were very supportive and helpful. Some instructors looked beyond what happened in the educational environment and understood the cause of a low level or change in academic performance. An instructor's understanding of social, emotional, economic, and cultural differences among the student population

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served enhances the ability to effectively help students' meet educational goals.

A related issue focuses on the extent to which postsecondary vocational technical education should provide prevocational services such as academic remediation and career counseling to targeted populations. Technical institute students have lower combined verbal and math aptitude scores and lower socioeconomic status than students entering other public postsecondary institutions in Minnesota (Office of the Legislative Auditor, 1983). Several of the students interviewed benefited from prevocational services. The nature of the technical institute population indicates prevocational services might be a real need for many students. The question becomes whether or not prevocational services should be a function of the technical institutes or some other educational institution. It has been found that adults who have been out of high school for a period of time and are returning to an educational setting would prefer to receive prevocational services at a technical institute rather than a high school (Parks, 1987). One might conclude that the technical institutes may need to be the focus of postsecondary prevocational services as well as vocational technical education.

Quality of Life and Learning

The Council in its seventh recommendation, urges both the secondary and postsecondary vocational systems to continue to acknowledge that vocational technical education is not an end in itself for some students, including those from targeted populations. Rather it is for some students an important step in the lifelong learning process, which may or may not include further vocational technical education. Not only do vocational students, including those from targeted populations, need the opportunity to acquire vocational skills but also to learn how to learn to advance their career and personal growth.

Changes in quality of life can result from changes in the economic, social, or psychological aspects of individuals' lives. The students' profiles highlighted the following changes as a result of vocational technical education which influenced the quality of life for students:

Completion of a vocational program is for some students an important step in the lifelong learning process, which may or may not include further vocational technical education.

- * Salary
- * Level of job position
- * Student retention
- * Feelings about self

One student who graduated from a vocational program did not receive a higher salary or job position than she had before she enrolled in the program. She did not feel better about herself but, rather, was angry because she spent time in a program with no apparent benefit. Other students, however, had more positive results because of a vocational program.

A high school student was completing her high school education only because vocational technical education provided her with an opportunity to develop vocational skills within the high school setting. This student was not very successful in academic courses and vocational courses helped her maintain her interest and motivation in completing high school. One assumes that the quality of life for this individual will be enhanced with a high school education.

For many students, vocational programs gave them skills which resulted in a salary with which they could support themselves and their families rather than rely on financial assistance. This ability to be self-sufficient resulted in a sense of dignity and high self-esteem. Several students said their initial salary after completing a vocational program was just enough to survive, but the completion of a vocational program made them eligible for promotions and salary increases which resulted very quickly after beginning a job.

For several students, enrollment in vocational technical education, whether in high school or a technical institute, represented the beginning of their occupational education pursuits. This is evidenced by four students who are either currently enrolled or planning to continue their education at a community college or state university. Also, two students have or are planning to take a related technical institute program after they complete their first program. Seeing the career benefits of their vocational education, students are anticipating even greater rewards from additional education. For example, a single parent is now working towards a college degree part-time after completing a vocational program and entering the job market.

Vocational technical education, therefore, enhances the quality of many individuals' lives by providing one step in lifelong learning. The enrollment

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in vocational programs provide skills for entrance into the job market and provides a base upon which to pursue additional education. The Council in 1983 in a Statement to the Governor's Commission on the Future of Postsecondary Education in Minnesota, addressed this need to view education as a lifelong process and to be "keenly aware of the interdependency of the various postsecondary systems in meeting Minnesota's education and training needs" (p. 1). This finding is also supported by the follow-up study of the class of 1985 which reports that 43 percent of students who completed a program at a Minnesota technical institute were involved in some form of additional education within one year of completing the program (1986 Follow-Up Report).

Coordination With Other Agencies

In its eighth recommendation, the Council urges both Boards to continue efforts to improve their coordination with other public and private agencies to enhance opportunities for targeted populations. A priority should be to pursue changes in public policy to allow for gradually diminished public financial support as vocational students from targeted populations enter the work force and rely more and more on their earned incomes.

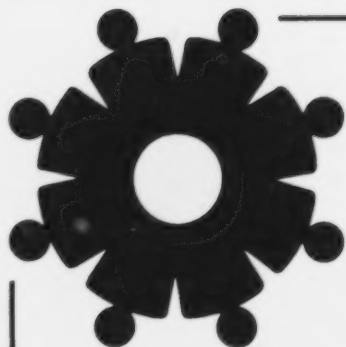
It is apparent that many students from targeted populations are benefiting from vocational technical education because of the support they receive from other agencies while receiving an education. Many students receive the federal Pell Grant and are involved in the work-study programs, both of which are available to all students in postsecondary education in Minnesota who meet eligibility requirements. In addition, however, many students are receiving public financial assistance to help provide for living expenses and child care costs while attending school. The Division of Rehabilitation Services of the Department of Jobs and Training also provides financial support for students with handicaps. A displaced farmer program which was administered through the Job Service of the Department of Jobs and Training provided financial and counseling support for one student. An OIC provided the support services for an incarcerated individual as she pursued vocational technical education. The Job Training Partnership Act provided financial support and counseling to a single parent who enrolled in a vocational program. One student received an Indian Scholarship which provided financial support during her education. The job site was part of the education of a secondary vocational student's program.

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It is apparent that many students from targeted populations are benefiting from vocational technical education because of the support they receive from other agencies while receiving an education.

Establishing networks with other agencies appears to be an essential part of the total package of services members of targeted populations rely upon to become enrolled and be successful in vocational programs. Some students had difficulty, however, making the transition from public financial assistance to being self-supporting as they leave school and enter the job market. Some students would have benefited from a gradual decrease in public financial assistance as the income from employment increased. However, with the present social service eligibility guidelines, this is not an option for many graduating students.

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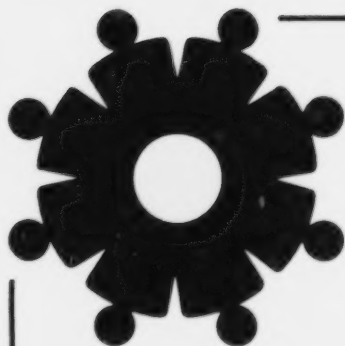


I. INTRODUCTION

Equity means many things to many people. A more focused meaning may be having the same number of males and females in a vocational technical education class. A broad meaning of equity may be treating individuals in a fair and just manner. For the purposes of this monograph it is worthwhile to consider the concept of equity as described by Plihal, Ernst, and Rehm (1986):

The concept of equity refers to justice, fairness. Underlying the notion of equity in education is the assumption that students are both alike and different. When they are alike in educationally relevant ways, they should be treated equally. When they are different in educationally relevant ways, they should be treated unequally. Perhaps the greatest problem in applying equity to education is to decide which variables are educationally relevant. There seems to be spoken agreement, backed by federal and state legislation, that sex, race, ethnicity, age, and handicaps are not educationally relevant. That means that regardless of students' sex, race, et cetera, they should have equal access and opportunity to benefit from educational programs. Where this position falls short--from the equity standpoint--is that in order to realize the benefits of an educational program, some students might need unequal treatment. They might need, for example, extra attention from the teacher in order to learn to perform certain tasks at which other students are already highly skilled because they experienced a different socialization process which included the development of those skills. Equal treatment in this case would be inequitable. Unequal treatment is not only justified but also demanded when it enables students to experience their basic human rights and liberties and when it moves them in the direction of living a life of personal meaning and dignity. (p. 5-6)

This report will consider three aspects of equity. First, consideration will be given to equity as it relates to access to vocational programs. Second, access to the knowledge in the class once the student is enrolled in the program will be explored. Third, equity regarding what happened as a result of the program will be examined.



II. THE EQUITY ISSUE

Barriers to Enrolling

Access to vocational classes and programs begins with a student becoming aware that an opportunity exists in vocational technical education. At the secondary level some students have some familiarity with a course or set of courses because the classes may be offered within their own school building. Their friends may be enrolled and, therefore, students may have an awareness of what vocational technical education has to offer. That perception of a course or set of courses will have a negative or positive valence which influences students in their decision to enroll. This perception may or may not be accurate as the course relates to a particular student's needs. Programs at the postsecondary level may not be as visible to the high school students or the members of the community which they serve. A displaced homemaker or displaced farmer may be unaware that programs exist down the road from where they live which would aid in retraining and employment. Individuals representing targeted populations have unique needs and characteristics which make them difficult to reach in recruitment. Not having accurate information about opportunities through vocational technical education is a barrier or wall which keeps people from benefiting from educational programs.

Once a person becomes aware of programs which might meet their educational needs, other barriers might prevent entrance into a program. At the secondary level these barriers may include having no room in an already full class schedule. At the postsecondary level, barriers for individuals may include distance from the school being prohibitive or lack of transportation altogether, unmet child care needs, or lack of facilities to meet the needs of people with disabilities. One often thinks of handicap facilities including ramps and parking and restroom facilities for those in wheel chairs. However, not providing necessary accommodations and support services to serve those who are deaf or blind or those who do not speak English may also be barriers which keep people from having access to vocational technical education.

Access barriers can also involve how people feel about themselves or those around them. Individuals may feel they are not the right age or not the right race to participate in a certain program. Individuals may have a low self-image and may believe they cannot compete in an educational setting. Along with these feelings one may have about self, there are the perceptions people have about what others think about their enrolling in a certain course or program. A parent may feel auto mechanics is not an appropriate occupation for a female. In this case, the barrier to educational opportunity would be the expectations of relevant people in a student's life.

An individual may get a subtle, or not-so-subtle, message from recruitment literature, counselors, or teachers within the educational setting about what programs are appropriate for a particular student which influences enrollment. Some advice and guidance may be necessary considering each individual student's needs and abilities regarding educationally-relevant variables.

These are all conceivable barriers which might keep an individual from pursuing vocational technical education. Barriers regarding enrollment for some students can be anticipated. For example, one might assume from knowledge of family literature that a single parent may have unique needs when it comes to recruitment, finances, child care, and personal support. A single parent will likely need special treatment in order to enroll and have the opportunity to succeed in a postsecondary vocational program as compared with a student who just completed high school with no family obligations. Other barriers may not be anticipated. For example, a potential student from a minority population may feel uncomfortable entering an educational institution because there is no visible evidence of other students representing that minority at that institution. There also may be no visible evidence of a particular minority represented in the staff which have initial encounters with a potential student. The responses on the part of a potential student result from very subtle messages on the part of educational institutions.

Barriers to Learning

Once a student breaks through enrollment barriers there are barriers to gaining access to knowledge. Goodlad (1984) uses the phrase "access to knowledge" to refer to the need to provide all students with the opportunity to take advantage of educational experiences. These barriers may be financial in nature which results in psychological stress. School-related expenses such as child care, tuition, books, equipment, or transportation can create a burden for students. If financial problems arise and students must miss school, because there is no money to cover the costs, access to learning is diminished. Students may even feel the stress of worrying about finances creates an obstacle which keeps them from maximizing the time spent in class.

Access to knowledge can also be diminished by prejudicial slurs or discriminating statements. A student's motivation to learn can be greatly affected by feelings of acceptance and caring in the learning situation. Some students are afraid to go back to a

Access to vocational programs begins with knowledge of the educational opportunity.

Individuals may feel that they are not the right age, race, or sex to participate in a particular vocational program.

Lack of money creates a barrier to learning. Worrying about money may keep students from maximizing their time in class.

learning situation after years of being out of high school, because past schooling was not a positive experience. Students need help to overcome these feelings of nonacceptance and inadequacy in order that learning can take place in vocational technical education. Some students from targeted populations may also be excluded from informal study groups and, therefore, may not have access to sources of information which helps the majority of students succeed in a course. Just the feeling of isolation can create barriers to knowledge to which other students have access (Simpson, 1987).

In some cases the program itself may not be of high quality and learning does not result because the knowledge is not made available to students. The teaching methods, books, and other visuals may not be appropriate for individual learning needs. For example, students may not have reading skills to understand a textbook and learning cannot occur if remediation or pictorial representation is not made available to students to learn the material. Students with visual, hearing, or language difficulties will need to have information presented in a way which does not discriminate on the basis of a learning disability.

Outcomes

Knowledge about outcomes of certain educational programs is an important equity issue. Did students know about eventual job placement rates, salary, or working conditions as they began a vocational program? Have students been adequately informed and prepared for outcomes which result from completion of a vocational program? There should be no major surprises as a student enters the world of work after completing a vocational program.

Another equity issue involves the subsequent quality of life which results from participation in vocational programs. Did the quality of life improve? There may be times when students complete a vocational program and are not qualified for a higher level job than when they began. The question needs to be asked: would the student have obtained the job without the vocational program?

Another issue which needs to be examined is to what extent does employment resulting from vocational technical education allow an individual to support oneself and one's family? If ultimate employment does not give a single parent more income than could be obtained from financial assistance, has the quality of life for the person improved?

The curriculum and instruction may become an equity issue if their quality impedes learning.

If ultimate employment does not give a single parent more income than could be obtained from financial assistance, has the quality of life for the person improved?

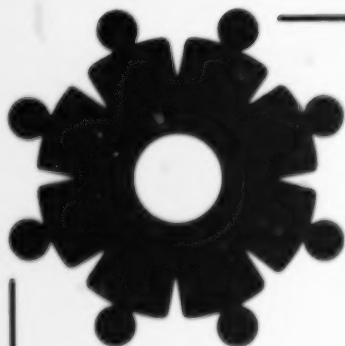
A final issue to consider is how people feel about the work they do. Does the employment which results from vocational programs provide people with a sense of meaning to their lives, a sense of accomplishment, a positive feeling about getting up and going to work on Monday morning?¹

Summary

The purpose of this discussion has been to become sensitive to equity issues in vocational technical education. The goal is to treat students in a fair and just manner in order that they may lead meaningful and useful lives. These concerns are real to students in vocational technical education as described in the next chapter. The equity issues highlighted by the students interviewed cannot all be addressed by educational institutions. However, it is important for individuals working with students and potential students in the educational setting to be aware of obstacles which keep students from achieving educational goals.

The goal is to treat students in a fair and just manner in order that they may lead meaningful and useful lives.

¹ This aspect of equity was presented at the 1986 Council Roundtable entitled "Targeted Populations and Vocational Education: Challenges and Opportunities."



III. STUDENT EXPERIENCES: ELEVEN PROFILES

Equity issues can be best understood when they are explored through the eyes of students who have been enrolled in vocational programs. To attain this understanding, 13 students who represent targeted populations were asked to describe their experiences with a focus on equity issues. Some of the students were part of a panel at the 1986 Council Roundtable entitled "Targeted Populations and Vocational Technical Education: Challenges and Opportunities." An effort was made to have members of all targeted populations in Minnesota represented in these interviews. The profiles which follow are either a summary of one individual or a composite of the experiences of more than one student. We thank the students for allowing us to view equity through their eyes.

Roger: Displaced Farmer

Roger had worked on the family farm for six years. The first four years were enjoyable, but during the last two "there was nothing coming in." The land was finally lost, and Roger sought a new career. Roger was interested in the areas of human services and surgical technician, and he visited two technical institutes to get information about their programs. He went to one technical institute, "and it seemed like they could much give a damn if I was there or not. That's the attitude they put out to me." The second technical institute he visited was just the opposite, and he decided to enroll in a human services technician program which would prepare him for counseling.

Roger had been out of high school for 12 years and he was concerned about the adjustment he needed to make enrolling in an educational institution. He found out about the displaced farmer program from a relative who was an advocate for farming groups. The program was administered through the Job Service which is the local office of the Department of Jobs and Training. They have listings of job openings which are available in the community. The displaced farmer program provided money to pay for books and tuition. He also received a federal Pell Grant through the technical institute, and he spent time on a work-study program. Roger's wife also worked full time to help support the family.

Financially it wasn't hard for us to adjust, 'cause we never had an income before we got started anyway. The last few years we farmed there was nothing left, more or less.... She [his wife] was real supportive. It helped a lot.... She knew what we were going through--what we needed to do.

Making the adjustment to a learning situation was actually not as difficult as he expected. He had a problem with spelling--"which is my weak point." The technical institute provided him with a self-paced spelling program to improve those skills. "The first six weeks, being out of school for 12 years, I wondered what the hell I was doing there." But he could see his own progress, see his study skills improve, and that helped him feel more comfortable.

One other area where Roger could have used some help was in the area of child care, but he was not eligible for child care assistance, because he was not a single parent. The children had grandparents in the area, and they helped out with child care, but there were times when it was difficult.

Roger was a male in an almost exclusively female program. "I was accepted pretty good. If the numbers had been reversed, I don't know how they would have accepted me."

Roger felt there was help available from the technical institute as he was going through the program. "The person who taught the class was kind of a mother to everybody. She would help anybody step through the different areas when they were having trouble." For example, one student had a Spanish background and had difficulty with understanding English. "They [the teachers] really went out of their way to second explain things to him."

According to Roger, the strength of the human services program lies in the numerous internship opportunities. Along with classroom experience students spend time in the field to gain experience working with differing populations. It also provides potential employers with an opportunity to see a student at work, and Roger was offered a job before he completed the program at one of his internship sites.

Roger had been told what he might expect in terms of employment and salary after he completed the program, and "I hit real close to the average person coming out." He would have difficulty solely supporting his family on his \$16,000 annual salary, but "compared to farming it's excellent." He says he would not have been promoted to his present position without the vocational technical education degree.

One aspect of the program which could have been improved was the availability of staff in the special needs area. "They were so short staffed. There's more and more need in that area--more people going back."

He went to one technical institute, "and it seemed like they could much give a damn if I was there or not. That's the attitude they put out to me."

"The first six weeks, being out of school for 12 years, I wondered what the hell I was doing there."

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Roger is presently taking coursework at a nearby community college and plans to work towards a two-year degree in behavioral science.

Karen: Sheet Metal Worker

Karen recently graduated from a sheet metal program at a Minnesota technical institute. She has a great sense of accomplishment which resulted from her ability to successfully support herself and her three children.

Karen had been receiving public assistance for several years, and in one of her monthly checks there was a note about the availability of financial support for education and training through JTPA (Job Training Partnership Act). She met with a JTPA counselor and began career assessment testing. She needed to support her family and do it quickly.

I jumped into the shortest program that gave the highest amount of money with the highest percentage of placement. And sheet metal was where I ended up.

Karen's previous employment had included supermarket cashier, assistant manager of a gas station, and retail work with her maximum wage being \$5.07 per hour.

I knew I couldn't raise three kids on that. I couldn't make the bills. I had unrealistically thought that even \$6 or \$8 per hour would be enough. But I look on it now and no way.

Through JTPA Karen received money for start-up costs such as books, boots, tools, transportation costs, and initial tuition money until the federal Pell Grant became available.

Returning to an educational institution was not easy for Karen.

I'm not a school person. I hated school in high school. I made it by the skin of my teeth, but I really didn't want to be there. And I was scared to go back.

There was remediation available for Karen, but she did not use it. There was always someone who could answer questions or explain things, and there were

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"I knew I couldn't raise three kids on that. I couldn't make the bills. I had unrealistically thought that even \$6 or \$8 per hour would be enough. But I look on it now and no way."

"I'm not a school person. I hated school in high school. I made it by the skin of my teeth, but I really didn't want to be there. And I was scared to go back."

pictorial representations with the instructions, or she could watch movies to better understand the material. "My instructor was wonderful, patient."

In addition to her fears about returning to an educational setting, Karen was going into a male-dominated profession. She was the only woman in the class and only the second woman to ever go through the program. But according to Karen,

[the other students] were wonderful....
We were there to learn, to get
an education.... I guess if I had
been a woman who couldn't communicate
with men in the class I would have
wanted somebody I could talk to. I
don't have any problem with men.
I was in the Marine Corps and there
aren't a whole lot of women there
either.... So I didn't feel that
loneliness. I could see where
somebody else might.

She found a job immediately after graduation which paid almost \$10 per hour. "That just blew me away."

Karen is the only woman employed in a shop with about 100 men. There is a division between the people who work in the shop and those who work in the office in terms of talking or spending time together. There is also a real difference in salaries in that the people in the shop earn substantially more money. Karen feels this is probably because the shop is comprised almost exclusively of men.

Karen would like to see people needing financial assistance receive some kind of job preparation when their children are younger.

Get them off the rolls, get them
out there working. They're going
to get their money back. It's worth
sending them to school--not only the
self-confidence for the person,
building them up, letting them know
that they're worth something. 'Cause
welfare has to be the most degrading,
most aggravating, frustrating thing
a person can be in. And there's
nowhere to turn.

Karen has good feelings about her employment even though she often works 10- and 12-hour days. She described how one day her boots got filled with water,

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and she was totally soaked by nine o'clock in the morning. "I was tired, but I felt good."

Jerry: Architectural Technician

Jerry is a student who has a hearing impairment and is attending a metropolitan technical institute in the architectural drafting and engineering program. He learned about the program from a recruitment counselor who came to a high school for the deaf which he was attending. Jerry was interested in coming to this particular technical institute, because he needed the support services for the deaf which were available.

"The first time I came here I felt awkward and depressed, but then I became excited and motivated for school." Jerry left his family and friends and adjusted to a new living and learning situation. Jerry does not read lips and, therefore, uses a sign language interpreter provided by the school to help him with classroom lectures. He also has a notetaker who takes class notes for him. "If I don't have a notetaker I can borrow notes, but they aren't always as accurate."

Jerry is the only person in the class with a hearing impairment. Students may play tricks on him and joke around, but according to Jerry, "they don't insult me." Teachers are generally helpful to Jerry. However, some teachers are better than others, because they explain things in more depth which facilitates learning for Jerry. Sometimes teachers also talk too fast, and he must rely on tutoring to understand the material. He has used tutoring services in the science areas where a group of both deaf and hearing students receive remediation together.

Jerry wears a hearing aid and can hear noises, but cannot distinguish words. This has created problems in concentrating for Jerry when students are very noisy, or when they play radios in class.

Jerry receives financial support from the Division of Rehabilitation Services of the Department of Jobs and Training and from his family to pursue his education. After completing the program at the technical institute, Jerry plans to attend a college in architectural drafting and engineering. He has already been accepted into college, but the college will determine how much additional coursework he will need for a four-year degree once he enrolls.

Jerry feels his needs have been met at the technical institute, and he has a "good feeling" about the program. "I've learned a lot."

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Sharon: Food Service Worker

Sharon is a fifty-year-old Native American woman who recently completed a commercial food service program at one of Minnesota's technical institutes. Sharon sought out the program when she lost her food service job to someone with a food service certificate. By enrolling in the vocational program Sharon felt she would have better job opportunities and job security.

Sharon did not have any problems adjusting to school life except in the area of mathematics. She had trouble converting amounts in recipes and received tutoring for mathematics at the technical institute.

Sharon received financial aid through a federal Pell Grant which was administered by the technical institute, a JTPA (Job Training Partnership Act) stipend, and an Indian Scholarship.

Generally the school experience was great from Sharon's perspective. She received support from other students and instructors, and the program made her "feel good about herself." Sharon did experience an incident where she felt an inappropriate racial slur was made by a teacher which reflected poorly on American Indians and, therefore, on Sharon. Sharon felt she had been doing well in the program and had proven herself, and the remark was not necessary. Sharon indicated that Indian students have had negative responses all their life, and prejudicial remarks can affect participation in the program.

Sharon's positive feelings while in the program did not continue as she began thinking about a job. Several of her classmates from the program began working in the food service area for \$5 to \$6 per hour. She had been earning \$7.50 per hour on the food service job she had before she entered the program. "It all sounds so wonderful," she said, "but finding a job that pays well is not easy." Sharon did not look for a job in the food service area because she was discouraged by the kinds of pay others in her class were receiving in the job market. One of her classmates was working two jobs to support a family. "Nobody likes to go to school every day and come home to a dinky apartment that's eating up your income." She felt the technical institute could have better prepared students for the low salaries which were available when they finished the food service program. "In school you feel great, but when you apply for a job your experience isn't enough." She felt she learned a great deal about food service, but it just was not enough to get a good job.

... Indian students have had negative responses all their life and prejudicial remarks can affect participation in the program.

"In school you feel great, but when you apply for a job your experience isn't enough."

Sharon has now enrolled in a human services program at a community college, and some of her work at the technical institute applied to that program. She has had past experiences in the human services area and feels that her combined education and experience will help her get a job which will allow her to support herself.

Mary: Computer Technician

Mary is a parent of four children who has completed six out of eight quarters of a computer technician program at a technical institute. She dropped out of the program after her sixth quarter when she had her fourth child. She was not able to keep up with the care and nurturing of a baby along with school responsibilities.

Mary became familiar with the computer technician program through a friend who was planning to enroll. She received remedial mathematics and English at the technical institute before she began the program.

Mary is part of a cultural minority which promotes a traditional woman's role in the home. For her to obtain education and become employed created a conflict with the cultural expectations of her husband and extended family. For many years Mary cooked, cleaned, and cared for the needs of nine people in one household. She knew very little of the world beyond her immediate neighborhood. She had no friends or social life beyond her family contacts, but exposure to television helped her develop English skills and knowledge about the larger world. As her children grew older, she worked outside the home which gave her experience in the world of work before she entered the technical institute.

When Mary enrolled in the computer technician program, she received no financial or psychological support from her husband or extended family. She received a federal Pell Grant through the technical institute. She had three children at that time who were in school and child care was not a major problem except during the summer months.

The major difficulties Mary encountered as she pursued the program was the tension which resulted with her husband and extended family as she tried to become an educated and independent woman. "In my culture the woman is not to get education at all," she explained, "It's not their fault, I don't blame them. That's how they were raised." Mary considered

*"In my culture
the woman is not
to get an educa-
tion at all."*

herself very different from most women in her culture. Typically women care for their families and when the children are old enough to care for themselves, the woman goes to work in her husband's relatives' business.

Mary's husband and extended family created numerous obstacles for her as she pursued her education. "My husband wouldn't let me leave for school until 9:00 a.m. Sending kids to school was my job and I didn't want to argue with him." So she went to school one hour late each day. At one point, her husband destroyed all her books and papers and Mary had to make copies at the technical institute. She then was told she needed to help out in the family business and worked six nights a week in addition to attending the technical institute all day and caring for her family's needs.

Mary was half way through the computer technician program when her grades of As and Bs began to slip to Cs and Ds. She did not tell the people at the technical institute about her problems at first. "People in my culture keep things to themselves," she said.

She received a mixture of support and criticism from students and instructors at that technical institute as she tried to juggle her education and home life. Generally, the instructors and other students were very helpful.

[Instructors] talk to me every day. They're really concerned. If I don't go to school one day, they call me and say, "Do you need some help? If you need some help, I'll spend more time with you." Instructors spent their lunchtime with me. Students come to my house and help me study.... Without instructors I would probably have quit school. It helped me to be in school. I had friends I enjoyed.... If it weren't for them, I'd have probably quite a long time ago.

However, there were a minority of students and teachers who were not understanding of Mary's family situation. Some people felt she should not pursue an education until she got her personal life straightened out. Mary responded, "People can't do that. If I waited until I got my life organized, I'd be 81 years old." Some students were really sarcastic

"People in my culture keep things to themselves."

"[Instructors] talk to me every day. They're really concerned. If I don't go to school one day, they call me and say, 'Do you need some help? If you need some help I'll spend more time with you.' ... If it weren't for them, I'd have probably quit a long time ago."

"If I waited until I got my life organized [so that I could go to school] I'd be 81 years old."

about her being able to come in an hour late when they could not do the same.

Mary dropped out of the technical institute after six quarters with two quarters remaining. She had a baby and planned to go back after the baby was born, but the care of this one additional child was too much for her.

She wants to and needs to go to work soon, because the family needs the income. She is happy about the education she received and thinks she can get a job using those skills. The job placement service through the technical institute is not helpful to her. She did not feel they had the resources to adequately help students with placement. She continues, however, to struggle with the needs of her family as she seeks out job possibilities on her own.

Marlys: Clerical Worker

Marlys enrolled in a technical institute program while she was incarcerated serving eight months of a five-year sentence. While she was incarcerated she enrolled in typing, word processing, and clerical procedures classes. The classes were available at the prison four hours per day. These technical institute classes are made available through an OIC (Opportunities Industrialization Center) which serves disadvantaged individuals. After she was released from prison, Marlys continued to take classes through OIC to complete her technical institute program.

Marlys had a previous prison record, but was successfully employed for eight years. She lost the job because someone called her place of employment and told them she had a prison record which she had not divulged when she applied for the job. Losing the job "turned me around, and I went back to things that I had done a long time ago." She got in trouble with the law which resulted in her most recent imprisonment.

While she was enrolled in the technical institute program, she received support services from OIC. "You have to have somebody who cares, and I knew those people cared." Her education costs were free, but when she was released from prison she needed to find a place to live and money for her basic needs.

Marlys had a previous prison record, but was successfully employed for eight years. She lost the job because someone called her place of employment and told them she had a prison record which she had not divulged when she applied for the job. Losing the job "turned me around, and I went back to things that I had done a long time ago." She got in trouble with the law which resulted in her most recent imprisonment.

I didn't qualify for welfare or food stamps, because my children are grown so money for food would have helped. I made it, but barely. I had to borrow money from the church to pay rent and a deposit on my apartment when I got out of prison. I'm an assertive person, and a fighter, but if I hadn't been I wouldn't have made it.

Marlys views the opportunity to enroll in the technical institute program as much more than preparing for employment.

I went to school to get my mind off what I was thinking about. I had a lot of problems. I had a lot of family that was going down the drain. A lot of things just went--I lost everything. And it was just to take my mind off everything that was going on. If it hadn't been for the program while I was in prison, I don't think I would have made it. That was something to look forward to do. All the teachers and instructors were very supportive.

Marlys regrets that people have to fit into categories to get help. "If I hadn't been incarcerated I wouldn't have had the money to go to an AVTI." She feels if people are disadvantaged in some way they should be able to benefit from a technical institute program.

It needs to be for all disadvantaged people whatever the situation, whether it's a temporary one or a permanent one, or whether you got yourself in trouble through somebody else or whether you just got depressed, or whether you did something and you didn't think about what you were doing.

Marlys said she probably would not have enrolled in a technical institute program if it had not been made available to her while she was in prison. She would have been fearful of the red tape--she would have been fearful of talking about her past.

"If it hadn't been for the program while I was in prison, I don't think I would have made it. That was something to look forward to do. All the teachers and instructors were very supportive."

Marlys was employed and going to school while she was in prison. She was then placed on a full-time job with the help of OIC when she completed the program earning \$5.30 per hour. She could not support herself on that income. She was quickly promoted to supervisor, which increased her salary and she could survive on that income even though it was very difficult. She has now moved on to another job with a substantial increase in pay. "I can maintain myself without worrying about if I spend a dollar over, I'm going to be in trouble."

Marlys is going to finish a two-year degree in marketing and then possibly finish a four-year degree by going to school on Saturdays. She plans to work up to an administrative position in her present place of employment.

The technical institute program had a major impact on her life.

I'd hate to think--I'd probably gotten really depressed. The training was the only thing that helped me. I'd probably have planned what I was going to do--more of what I was doing, and get into more trouble. I'd probably have been back [in prison] by now. I'm a survivor. I'm going to survive one way or another. If I can survive legitimately, I'm going to do that. But if I can't, then I'm going to survive another way.

Vinh: Bilingual Student

Vinh came to this country from Viet Nam and has been here for a year. He is in a prevocational bilingual program at a Minnesota technical institute.

Many friends have studied here. Because they came to this vocational school they know how to do things. I want to know how to do things like them.

After he completes the bilingual program, which will take from three to six months, he plans to enter a vocational program at the technical institute.

The bilingual program includes classes in English as a Second Language, reading, mathematics, GED

"The training was the only thing that really helped."

"Many friends have studied here. Because they came to this vocational school they know how to do things. I want to know how to do things like them."

(General Equivalency Diploma) preparation, and career exploration. Development of skills in these areas are for the purpose of preparing for a vocational program. Vinh, along with many others in the program, could speak some English but could not read or write in the English language.

Vinh is receiving public assistance to help cover living expenses and the federal Pell Grant through the technical institute to cover tuition and books. Even with this financial assistance, Vinh says he worries "about studying and money, money, money."

Vinh was a farmer in Viet Nam and had never lived in a city before coming to the United States. He has been living with a family who has many problems, and now he must move to another apartment. There are many adjustments to make.

Vinh's experience at the technical institute has been positive and he sees the teachers as being very patient. "There's always help when I ask a question."

Vinh's immediate goal is to learn the English language.

Asian people have to go to school
and learn about English. If you're
good at English you can go out
and talk like Americans and do what
American people do.

Susan: Woodworker

Susan has always enjoyed working with her hands, and in 8th grade she began taking vocational education classes in school and especially enjoyed home economics and industrial education. However, she soon focused on woodworking, because she enjoyed it the most.

Susan is now a senior in high school and spends four to five hours per day in the high school classroom and spends the rest of the day working on a job outside of school where her job is making cabinets. She has tried several jobs at the worksite including mixing stains, staining, and sanding. She receives a salary of \$4.00 per hour as a part-time worker and hopes to earn \$4.50 to \$5.00 per hour when she graduates from high school in just a few months. Susan is planning to ask for a raise soon. "All the guys have gotten raises, but I haven't so far." When asked if she had not received a raise because she was a female

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money."*

*"There's always
help when I ask a
question."*

*"If you're good
at English you
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Americans and do
what American
people do."*

in a non-traditional field, she said, "I'm not sure." She said it could also be because the supervisor did not know how much she has improved since she began the job.

The process Susan has gone through to get where she is today has not always been easy for her. Susan feels her vocational teachers have always supported her, but the students in classes, who are almost exclusively male, have not always been so kind.

In 9th and 10th grade the guys really put me down because I was the only girl. They would go, "Did they stick you with this class or what?"

In my sophomore year I got locked in my project (a cabinet). My teacher asked me to see if it was long enough, 'cause it was four feet long and they wanted to see if I could fit in it. The guys sort of grabbed the top and sat on the top with me in it during class.

Although this incident is something she laughs about, it was lonely being the only female in an all male class. She generally dealt with this behavior by ignoring it. "After you ignore them for awhile, they just left me alone."

Teachers outside of vocational technical education and counselors were not always supportive of her choices of classes. Regarding other teachers, "Well, quite a few of them have sort of looked at me, like 'woodworking?'" Some made comments that her choices of classes were not "ladylike." A counselor at a previous school had a similar response when she indicated she was going to sign up for a shop class.

But Susan had supportive parents and has developed her interests by working with her father.

They tell me go for whatever I want.
If I like it, go for it. Last summer
I built a cabin with my dad.

Academic subjects have always been difficult for Susan.

"In 9th and 10th grade the guys really put me down because I was the only girl."

*It was lonely being the only female in an all male class ...
"After you ignore them for awhile, they just left me alone."*

I've never really been good in school. I missed half of my elementary years because I didn't really like the teachers and that, so I just didn't go to school.... I had negative feelings about school, I always have.... I have a good reading ability. It's just that I don't have a good attention span. If I don't understand what I'm doing then I'm lost, I can't do it. **[Working with wood]** I'm happy because I understand what I'm doing.

She has had to repeat several academic courses to meet graduation requirements, but vocational technical education classes have been a positive experience for her. "I get Bs and Cs which is good compared to all my other grades."

If vocational technical education classes had not been available to her she probably would not graduate from high school. When she was in 7th grade she planned on dropping out of school when she turned 16. "Because of the program I've stayed in school."

Her plans include enlisting in the Air Force within a year after she graduates from high school.

All I have to do is register and take the physical. Otherwise I'm all set.... I'm going in for jet mechanics. I scored high on the mechanics and crafts part and I've been guaranteed a mechanics job.... I like doing things with my hands. They will pay for part of my education after high school, plus I'll be getting experience doing that career.

Susan enjoyed working with her father on cars, but she did not take auto mechanics classes in high school, because she did not have enough free hours.

Susan's immediate concern is to graduate from high school. She does not expect to support herself immediately after she graduates even though she expects to make about \$5 per hour.

"Because of the program I've stayed in school."

Right now no, because of the car payments I have and because I just put a used transmission in my car.... Between my long distance phone calls [to a boyfriend], the car payment, and everything else.... I could get by on \$5 per hour as long as I'm living at home.

She did not expect the school to prepare her for a job to support herself. "No, just a job. The pay and that is up to me."

After four years in the Air Force she thinks she might get advanced education in jet mechanics at a technical institute. Of course, these plans may be influenced by marriage and having children which are also part of Susan's long-term plans.

Louis: Electrical Worker

Louis is a Spanish-speaking, single male who immigrated to the United States from Cuba. His family is still living in Cuba, which creates stress for Louis as he tries to make a life for himself here in the United States. He does write to his family, but it often takes more than two months for a letter to reach Cuba.

Louis has lived in the United States for seven years and he has spent several years learning the language and developing skills for a trade. He did complete a professional driver course and was a truck driver for about three years. He liked the job very much. However, he lost his driver's license and needed to retrain for another profession.

Louis found out about the technical institute from friends and advertisements on television. He came to the technical institute to find out more about the programs which might be available for him. "When I first came I felt happy, you know, that I had the chance to go to school."

Louis spent one quarter getting remedial education including English, mathematics, and completing his GED (General Equivalency Diploma). According to Louis, "It's to help you get back into schooling." After this initial quarter, Louis entered a one-year program in electrical mechanical technology. He has continued to receive mathematics remediation as he goes through the program.

Louis found out about the technical institute from friends and advertisements on television. He came to the technical institute to find out more about the programs which might be available for him. "When I first came I felt happy, you know, that I had the chance to go to school."

Louis has positive feelings about the program.

Teachers help me as much as they can. They're really concerned about you getting high grades. If you ask them, they help you. They want you to succeed.

Louis says the one thing that sometimes keeps him from learning is worrying about family and finances.

Sometimes I worry about my family and finances. That worry is pretty heavy. You have to worry where gas mileage is going to come from. I fight it. I try to concentrate on what I'm doing.

Louis has not shared these concerns with counselors, but he knows they are available if he needs them.

Louis receives the federal Pell Grant to cover tuition and books and "unfortunately, I've been getting general assistance" which helps cover living expenses. Louis did not feel good about needing financial assistance.

Louis has been told there is almost 100 percent placement rate from his program, and expects he might earn \$14-\$15 per hour when he graduates. He is looking forward to having a salary with which he can support himself.

Alicia: Accountant

Alicia completed a two-year accounting program five years ago at her local technical institute. "I got divorced and all of a sudden I realized I had a good job, but it was an evening job, and I needed to work during the day." Alicia had children and she needed to be home at night with them. She was about 25 years old at the time, and she knew she needed more education. She also felt four years of college was too long for her to be in school considering her present obligations.

Alicia quit her factory job and began receiving AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children). "That was the hardest thing. But I knew the day would come when I didn't need it." The AFDC program provided her with income for living expenses and paid for child care expenses. She received a federal Pell Grant through the technical institute to cover books and tuition, she was involved in work-study, and transportation costs were provided by CETA.

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In a magazine Alicia read about the displaced homemakers' program which was available through CETA (Comprehensive Employment Aid Training Act). Alicia wanted to pursue a graphic arts program, but the counselors at the technical institute discouraged her from enrolling in that program. "The jobs were not available and the money I needed was not there." She instead enrolled in an accounting program, and now she feels good about that decision.

Alicia describes her feelings entering the program.

I was probably about 25 at the time. Most of the kids in the class were 18. I had never had an accounting class before in my life. I didn't fit in real well, the older students kind of went their own way, and the younger kids went their way too.

She felt comfortable with the teachers because they had worked in the field and were practical in their teaching. She also adjusted quickly to the habit of studying, because she could study with her own children in the evenings.

As a single parent, Alicia needed some special consideration which other students might not need.

When I got my teachers' evaluations I had been late a few days, and they would comment about how I was late. I think it had to do with having to do ten things before I got to school. I guess that was the only thing. I lived through it, and they put up with me on that. I didn't miss a lot of school either.

The main thing that seemed to concern other single parents was money. "I know of one girl who just couldn't make it, and she had to drop out." For some it might have been a combination of money plus the schoolwork being too hard for them.

The job placement services at the technical institute were very helpful in placing Alicia on a job after she completed the program. She could support herself and her children after completing the program although "it wasn't easy." An important part of being placed on that first job was that "I could go to the welfare office and say, 'Bye.'"

She felt prepared for her place in the workforce, because many of her teachers had experience in the

"When I got my teachers' evaluations I had been late a few days, and they would comment about how I was late. I think it had to do with having to do ten things before I got to school. I guess that was the only thing. I lived through it, and they put up with me on that. I didn't miss a lot of school either."

"An important part of being placed on that first job was that I could go to the welfare office and say, 'bye.'"

workforce. They often related experiences which were helpful in letting her know what to expect and as a result "school was harder than work." She worked for five years for one company and has now moved on to a position with a higher salary in another company.

Alicia's technical institute credits applied to her lower division coursework requirements at Metropolitan State University. She has been taking additional courses there for the past five years and has one college year to complete.

Alicia's children have been influenced by the experiences of their mother. "My kids say they're going to school right away. They're not going to wait until they're my age."

Mark: Orthotic Technician

Mark is a student who has multiple handicaps from injuries resulting when his body was crushed in an industrial accident four years ago. Prior to the accident Mark was a very physically active person both personally and on his previous jobs--but the accident changed all that. He could not maintain the physical activity which was required on his previous job and he knew he must retrain. Mark talks about changes in his life.

You have lost more than a job.
You've lost a way of life. Along
with the physical disability comes
emotional, psychological problems
with your new life. There are
adjustments to make.

Although Mark cannot do physical labor he is not certifiably handicapped for Social Security or Veteran Administration purposes and, therefore, is not eligible for benefits.

Mark received financial support from the insurance company where he had worked to become trained for a new profession. His benefits were limited to tuition payments for a 12-month program and 60 percent of previous wages for that same period of time. Mark was interested in orthotics and enrolled in a technical institute program which was one-year long. This program provides training in making braces for people who have disabilities resulting from such things as accidents and birth defects. Because of his physical disabilities and the adjustment he was making to these disabilities, Mark could not finish the program in 12 months but, instead, took 14 months to complete the

"My kids say they're going to school right away. They're not going to wait until they're my age."

" ... You've lost a way of life. Along with the physical disability comes emotional, psychological, problems with your new life. There are adjustments to make."

program. His financial support was extended during that time. According to Mark, "There's only so much I can do. The fact that I've made it this far is surprising to everyone."

When Mark finished orthotics he went right into a 12-month prosthetics program at the same technical institute, which involves making artificial limbs. He felt his knowledge in both areas would make him more employable. He is presently half-way through this second program, but he knows he will need extra time to finish. He has now run out of financial resources, however, and he does not think he can stay in the program for more than three additional months. He has received some help for tuition from Rehabilitation Services and is working 10 hours per week on a work-study program at the technical institute. However, this financial support does not cover his basic needs. At one point Mark did get a job on weekends, but found that he could not handle the stress of that amount of hours plus the educational requirements.

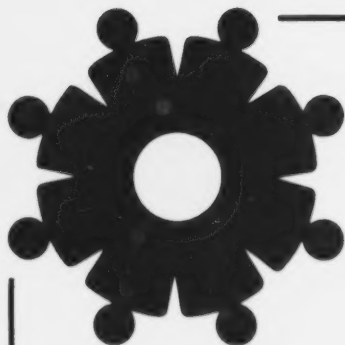
Mark's biggest problem is financial. He has not met the financial assistance requirements at the technical institute because he cannot maintain the 90 percent progress rate required to qualify for assistance. "Nowhere in the system are there provisions for adequate progress based on ability level." Every student is compared to a "normal" student, even though Mark says there are many students who have handicaps or family circumstances which keep them from progressing at this rate. He feels this is unfair and discriminates against students with any kind of problem.

The emotional support he needed is available through the special resources instructor at the technical institute. This person helps him when he needs "to let off steam because [he's] so frustrated with the system." He feels the instructors are understanding and supportive of his situation and have tried to help him increase his progress rate. "That's great, but it doesn't buy the beans." The other students are also supportive. "If it weren't for them many of us would have quit."

Mark expects to find a job when he finishes the program and hopes to earn at least \$7 per hour. Although, he expects that having to leave the program early due to finances will diminish his job opportunities. Mark concludes, "My training is for my own personal benefit--to say that I can work. Dignity. That's what it's all about."

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IV. PROGRAMS TO PROMOTE EQUITY

There are many aspects of the total vocational technical education system which help in promoting equity for all students. This chapter will focus on services which are specifically designated to serve targeted populations or which directly promote equity in vocational technical education. By providing these services, efforts are made to help meet needs of targeted populations which are unique to those populations.

The services described often vary from one educational institution to another and are generally not provided at all educational institutions. In some cases a service may be available at only one institution in the state. There are, however, specific equal access mandates under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act that are applicable to the conduct of both secondary and postsecondary programs. Some monies are made available to some or all institutions in the state, whereas other services result from requests for proposals and monies are distributed accordingly. The services provided may result from a combination of federal, state, and local monies. Some services are funded in coordination with JTPA (Job Training Partnership Act) funds and grant monies.

The information for this chapter is drawn from the 1987 Minnesota State Plan for Vocational Technical Education and from interviews with staff of the Minnesota Department of Education and the State Board of Vocational Technical Education. Services vary from year to year and may have been different during the year a student, described in the student profiles, participated in a vocational program.

The following services are available within the state system but vary from institution to institution.

Programs at the Secondary Level

Federal Vocational Allocations for Fiscal Year 1987

- 1) Services for handicapped youth opportunities to participate in off-campus vocational training or work experience programs. This service is intended to provide handicapped youth with skills which lead to greater employability. (a), (b), (c)

\$50,000

Federal Vocational
Allocations
for Fiscal Year 1987

2) Vocational assessment by 9th grade for handicapped and disadvantaged students. This assessment addresses students' abilities, interests, and special needs. (a)	\$76,000
3) Guidance, counseling, and career development to handicapped and disadvantaged students to better prepare them to succeed in vocational programs.* (a)	-0-
4) Counseling services to handicapped and disadvantaged students to facilitate the transition to postsecondary education and career opportunities. (a)	-0-
5) Special projects in selected vocational programs to reduce sex bias and sex-role stereotyping. This service provides nontraditional students with awareness and access to opportunities where they can achieve their educational and employment goals.	\$107,000
6) Programs which are specifically designed to meet the needs of handicapped youth such as modification of curriculum and equipment to accommodate student needs. (a), (b)	\$45,000
7) Support services to special needs students who are enrolled in regular vocational education programs. Support managers facilitate modification in curriculum and equipment, outside agency services, and act as students' advocates. Technical tutors work with small groups to provide tutorial assistance in technical skill areas. (a), (b)	\$440,000
8) Career exploration and work experience opportunities for potential high school dropouts.	-0-
9) Educational support services to incarcerated youth in state correctional facilities. Services include vocational evaluation and assessment.	\$34,850
10) Vocational assessment services for youth who have been referred to local or regional correction facilities.	\$15,000

*The Perkins Act requires each local education agency to provide information to handicapped and disadvantaged students and parents concerning opportunities in vocational education no later than the beginning of the ninth grade.

- 11) Assessment, transportation, and child care for teenage single parents.

Federal Vocational
Allocations
for Fiscal Year 1987

\$241,220

Programs at the Postsecondary Level

- 1) Support services such as child care and transportation to single parents and homemakers to enhance assessability and retention in technical institutes.

\$350,000

- 2) Courses, services, and programs addressing the vocational needs of single parents and homemakers.

\$400,000

- 3) Services to single parents and homemakers with vocational training to enhance employability. Services include tuition subsidies and support services.

\$312,252

- 4) Equity projects which provide services and activities for women in nontraditional vocational programs.

Internal Federal Budget

- 5) Provide assurance of equal access in recruitment, enrollment, and placement for handicapped and disadvantaged individuals. (a)

-0-

- 6) Increase access of handicapped and disadvantaged individuals to the full range of vocational programs. The effort is made to counsel students towards less restrictive options. (a)

-0-

- 7) Programs and activities for handicapped individuals are to be provided in the least restrictive environment. Efforts are made to coordinate planning between vocational education and special education. (a)

-0-

- 8) Assessment of interests and special support needs to enhance successful completion of a program for handicapped and disadvantaged students who enroll in vocational programs. (a)

\$100,000

- 9) Support services for handicapped and disadvantaged students such as adaptation of curriculum, instruction, equipment, and facilities in order to meet unique learning needs. (a)

\$2,300,000

Federal Vocational
Allocations
for Fiscal Year 1987

10) Career guidance and counseling from professionally trained counselors for handicapped and disadvantaged students. (a)	-0-
11) Counseling to enhance the transition from training to employment for handicapped and disadvantaged students. (a)	-0-
12) Coordination efforts between postsecondary special needs supervisors and secondary special education to insure a timely and supportive introduction into postsecondary vocational education programs and support services.	-0-
13) Guidance and counseling services are provided to help students have access to all programs and services in the technical institute system. This includes information on student financial aids.	\$30,000
14) Information to students from all socioeconomic backgrounds of the educational opportunities available at the technical institutions.	-0-
15) Short-term bilingual vocational programs and support services for limited English proficient populations.	\$266,675
16) Information and counseling to Minnesota minority communities regarding postsecondary opportunities.	\$383,382
17) Basic skill development, vocational English as a second language, and counseling to enhance access and retention of incarcerated adults to those participating in vocational programs.	\$75,121
18) Placement counselors and/or instructors to help technical institute students secure full-time and part-time employment.	-0-
19) Services and vocational programs for dislocated workers coordinate with the Governor's Job Training Council. Assessment, career counseling, personal guidance and support services for dislocated workers with information to assist them in choosing training programs which will enhance reemployment.	Funds available through JTPA

Federal Vocational
Allocations
for Fiscal Year 1987

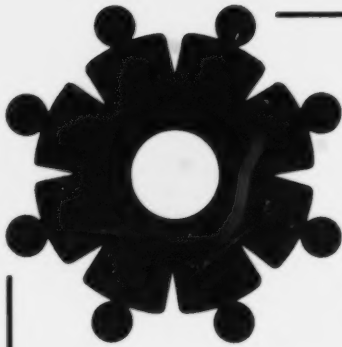
\$900,000

20) Occupational training and support services for economically disadvantaged individuals.

21) Funding for community-based organizations to provide prevocational services for students who plan to enter a vocational program.

This list of programs at the secondary and post-secondary level illustrates the scope of services provided to promote equity in vocational technical education in Minnesota.

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- (a) Implements provisions of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act.
 - (b) Implements provisions of the Education of the Handicapped Act.
 - (c) Implements provisions of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.



V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Several concluding themes become evident as a result of the interviews with vocational students representing targeted populations in chapter three. These themes directly relate to the equity issues discussed in the second chapter of this report. The student interviews provide a glimpse of what some students from targeted populations experience in vocational programs. Their experiences provide helpful insights and are reflected in the recommendations, of which there are eight.

It is important on the onset to commend the State Board of Vocational Technical Education and the State Board of Education for their commitment to providing targeted populations with equity in vocational technical education. It is evident that vocational programs have a positive impact on the lives of many individuals representing targeted populations. The State Council on Vocational Technical Education urges the Boards to continue this commitment to meet the individual needs of all students who can benefit from vocational programs. It is to this end that the Council offers its recommendations.

Regarding Marketing and Recruitment

Recommendation One: The State Council on Vocational Technical Education recommends that the marketing of vocational programs and the recruitment of students be enhanced on all fronts.

a) Both the State Board of Education and the State Board of Vocational Technical Education should continue to work toward informing all current and potential students, including elementary school children, of the availability and benefits of vocational course offerings in the high schools, secondary cooperative centers, and technical institutes.

b) Secondary vocational educators, together with their program advisory committees, must play a central role in informing students and parents, as well as school board members, administrators, counselors, and other teachers.

c) The State Board of Vocational Technical Education should augment its efforts to recruit students from all strata of the population and pay particular attention to the recruitment of students from targeted populations.

d) The State Board of Vocational Technical Education should provide secondary guidance counselors with current, comprehensive, readily useable information about programs and services for targeted populations wherever offered in the state.

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Recommendation Two: The State Council on Vocational Technical Education recommends that guidance counselors in the secondary schools become aware of the benefits and potential outcomes for students who enroll in vocational technical education.

- a) The educational institutions in Minnesota which educate guidance counselors should provide a balance between emphasis on academic and vocational guidance.
- b) The professional guidance organizations should encourage continued education in both academic and vocational guidance for their members.
- c) Guidance counselors should keep themselves knowledgeable about the benefits and potential outcomes for students who enroll in vocational technical education and use this information to meet the unique needs of each student.

It is evident from this study that marketing of vocational programs and student recruitment are not consistently effective at all levels. Three issues emerge.

First, high school personnel are often unaware of the benefits for students who enroll in vocational technical education. This is evident in the profile of the female student who was pursuing woodworking at the secondary level and felt resistance from non-vocational school personnel regarding her choice of professions. In this case, the resistance focused on the issue of a woman pursuing a nontraditional vocation. Students are also often discouraged from enrolling in vocational courses if they are considered "college material" (Copa, Pihl, Scholl, Ernst, Rehm, & Copa, 1986). There is an apparent need for all high school personnel, especially guidance counselors, to be knowledgeable about vocational offerings and outcomes as well as academic offerings. Lack of support for vocational technical education on the part of non-vocational school personnel creates barriers for student enrollment.

Second, high school counselors do not have available current, comprehensive, readily useable information about programs and services for targeted populations offered throughout the state. Services vary from one technical institute to another and it is difficult to be knowledgeable about where needs can best be met for a particular student. To better understand the extent to which guidance counselors have knowledge

Marketing of vocational programs and student recruitment should be enhanced on all fronts.

Guidance counselors in the secondary schools should become aware of the benefits and potential outcomes for students who enroll in vocational technical education.

regarding these services, a telephone survey was conducted at rural, urban, and suburban high schools. It was found that counselors are generally unaware of services for targeted populations provided at the technical institutes in Minnesota. Some counselors are knowledgeable about services at nearby technical institutes but are unfamiliar with services statewide. Counselors begin making telephone contacts to ask about support services as students with special needs become known to them. One counselor relied heavily on a reference which is more than five years old for this information. Counselors also rely on support from representatives from the Division of Rehabilitation Services of the Department of Jobs and Training and special education departments at the local high schools. One counselor said the information was probably somewhere in the numerous publications he had received, but he did not have time to go through all the information. This lack of a brief and comprehensive publication may be keeping students from becoming knowledgeable about and, therefore, enrolling in vocational programs which would best meet their needs.

Third, marketing and student recruitment information have not consistently reached the individuals represented in the student profiles. Of the 13 students interviewed for this report, only four students became aware of the vocational programs directly through marketing and recruitment efforts. Most students learned of programs through friends or relatives. One student found out about a program through a friend who asked her to care for her child while she completed an entrance test. It is recognized that reaching targeted populations through marketing often requires increased resources and working with other organizations.

These three issues focus on assessability to vocational technical education. Are individuals, especially individuals representing targeted populations, provided with information and support to enroll in vocational programs in Minnesota? This does not appear to be happening effectively or consistently.

Regarding Career Counseling

Recommendation Three: The State Council on Vocational Technical Education recommends that, as a matter of policy, the technical institutes consistently advise potential and new students about prevailing and projected job placement rates and wage scales relative to students' financial needs and expectations once they have graduated.

Students enrolling in Minnesota's technical institutes should be advised about prevailing and projected job placement rates and wage scales relative to students' financial needs and expectations once they have graduated.

- a) Admissions counselors at the technical institutes should provide counseling regarding the interface between job placement rates and salary as they relate to the students' financial needs.
- b) Minnesota's technical institutes should provide printed information, such as brochures, which would be available to all students at the time of enrolling, stating job placement rates and salary information.

Generally, students perceived the information they received about potential job placement rates and salary as it relates to their financial need as helpful and realistic. One student said, "there were no surprises." A woman who was a single parent was encouraged to consider accounting rather than a graphic arts program, because it was unlikely she could support herself and her children with the graphics arts degree she wanted to pursue. Looking back, this individual appreciated the guidance.

One of the students did not look for a job after completing a food service program, because her fellow students were not finding jobs with the salary she needed to support herself. She is now enrolled in a community college with hopes of receiving an adequate salary after completing a two-year degree in human services. It is likely this student would have benefited from information about potential job placement rates and salary before she enrolled in the program.

Regarding Job Placement Services

Recommendation Four: The State Council on Vocational Technical Education recommends that the State Board of Vocational Technical Education evaluate the current policies and practices relative to the job placement services offered in the technical institutes. The Council suggests that the proposed evaluation focus on effectiveness and fairness for all students and particularly for those who are members of targeted populations. The Council poses four questions that it suggests be included in the evaluation:

1. Do teachers have the skills that qualify them to provide job placement services? If not, what provisions are made to teach the necessary skills? Also, what additional opportunities are provided through which teachers increase and refine their skills?

An evaluation should be completed on the current policies and practices relative to the job placement services offered in the technical institutes.

2. How do teachers handle placement of students in the lower half of their class when an unsatisfactory placement might affect future job placements with a particular employer?

3. Do teachers advise students to take low paying jobs in order to sustain high program placement rates?

4. How does the perceived likelihood of successfully placing a student in a job influence the decision to admit the student?

The students interviewed had differing experiences regarding job placement at the technical institutes. One student received a list of companies from the instructor where students had been previously placed. This was the extent of the assistance she received. One student was hired where he previously had served an internship. Another student would have been able to find employment with the help of the technical institute in either a small town or urban setting.

A stated goal of the State Board of Vocational Technical Education is to make employment opportunities available to all technical institute students. This may be an impossible task. Students do need job-seeking and job-keeping skills, as well as knowledge about possible employment opportunities. Follow-up reports for students who graduated from Minnesota's technical institutes in 1984 and 1985 indicate 33 and 28 percent of students, respectively, received assistance from technical institute personnel in securing their first job. The remainder of students received assistance from private employment agencies, relatives or friends, the state employment agency, or they found employment on their own (Minnesota Student Information System, 1985, 1986). The majority of students do not secure their first job with assistance from the technical institute. It is not clear whether students choose to use other sources to secure employment, or if the technical institutes do not have the resources to help students find employment.

Regarding Commitment to Serve Targeted Populations

Recommendation Five: The State Council on Vocational Technical Education recommends that the State Board of Vocational Technical Education and the State Board of Education continue providing staff development activities for vocational technical education staffs to help them understand better the needs and characteristics of targeted populations.

Staff development activities should continue to be offered to help vocational staffs better understand the needs and characteristics of targeted populations.

Recommendation Six: The State Council on Vocational Technical Education recommends that the State Board of Vocational Technical Education renew its commitment to increase prevocational services at Minnesota's technical institutes.

Meeting the needs of targeted populations is mandated by the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984 and is an essential part of the concept of equity. Some students may need unequal treatment in order to benefit from an educational program (Plihal, Ernst, & Rehm, 1986). It needs to be clearly stated that vocational technical education cannot meet all the needs of all students; but, rather, the major focus should be on students' educational needs. However, very often students have difficulty meeting educational goals because of the impact of other aspects of their lives. It is important, therefore, that vocational personnel be sensitive to and understand the impact of various aspects of students' lives on their ability to accomplish educational goals.

The students interviewed indicated they had received varying degrees of support and understanding from instructors. Some instructors contributed to the sense of frustration and added to the students' feeling of being overwhelmed while other instructors were very supportive and helpful. Some instructors looked beyond what happened in the educational environment and understood the cause of a low level or change in academic performance. An instructor's understanding of social, emotional, economic, and cultural differences among the student population served enhances the ability to effectively help students' meet educational goals.

A related issue focuses on the extent to which postsecondary vocational technical education should provide prevocational services such as academic remediation and career counseling to targeted populations. Technical institute students have lower combined verbal and math aptitude scores and lower socioeconomic status than students entering other public postsecondary institutions in Minnesota (Office of the Legislative Auditor, 1983). Several of the students interviewed benefited from prevocational services. The nature of the technical institute population indicates prevocational services might be a real need for many students. The question becomes whether or not prevocational services should be a function of the technical institutes or some other educational institution. It has been found that adults who have been

There should be a renewed commitment to increase prevocational services at Minnesota's technical institutes.

out of high school for a period of time and are returning to an educational setting would prefer to receive prevocational services at a technical institute rather than a high school (Parks, 1987). One might conclude that the technical institutes may need to be the focus of postsecondary prevocational services as well as vocational technical education.

Regarding Quality of Life and Learning

Recommendation Seven: The State Council on Vocational Technical Education recommends that the secondary and postsecondary vocational systems continue to acknowledge that vocational technical education is not an end in itself for some students, including those from targeted populations. Rather it is for some students an important step in the lifelong learning process, which may or may not include further vocational technical education. Not only do vocational students including those from targeted populations, need the opportunity to acquire vocational skills but also to learn how to learn to advance their career and personal growth.

Changes in quality of life can result from changes in the economic, social, or psychological aspects of individuals' lives. The students' profiles highlighted the following changes as a result of vocational technical education which influenced the quality of life for students:

- * Salary
- * Level of job position
- * Student retention
- * Feelings about self

One student who graduated from a vocational program did not receive a higher salary or job position than she had before she enrolled in the program. She did not feel better about herself. Rather, she was angry because she spent time in a program with no apparent benefit. Other students, however, had more positive results because of a vocational program.

A high school student was completing her high school education only because vocational technical education provided her with an opportunity to develop vocational skills within the high school setting. This student was not very successful in academic courses and vocational courses helped her maintain her interest and motivation in completing high school.

Not only do students, including those from targeted populations, need the opportunity to learn vocational skills but also to learn how to learn to advance their career and personal growth.

One assumes that the quality of life for this individual will be enhanced with a high school education.

For many students, vocational programs gave them skills which resulted in a salary with which they could support themselves and their families rather than rely on financial assistance. This ability to be self-sufficient resulted in a sense of dignity and high self-esteem. Several students said their initial salary after completing a vocational program was just enough to survive, but the completion of a vocational program made them eligible for promotions and salary increases which resulted very quickly after beginning a job.

For several students, enrollment in vocational technical education, whether in high school or a technical institute, represented the beginning of their occupational education pursuits. This is evidenced by four students who are either currently enrolled or planning to continue their education at a community college or state university. Also, two students have or are planning to take a related technical institute program after they complete their first program. Seeing the career benefits of their vocational education, students are anticipating even greater rewards from additional education. For example, a single parent is now working towards a college degree part-time after completing a vocational program and entering the job market.

Vocational technical education, therefore, enhances the quality of many individuals' lives by providing one-step in lifelong learning. The enrollment in vocational programs provide skills for entrance into the job market and provides a base upon which to pursue additional education. The Council in 1983 in a Statement to the Governor's Commission on the Future of Postsecondary Education in Minnesota, addressed this need to view education as a lifelong process and to be "keenly aware of the interdependency of the various postsecondary systems in meeting Minnesota's education and training needs" (p. 1). This finding is also supported by the follow-up study of the class of 1985 which reports that 43 percent of students who completed a program at a Minnesota technical institute were involved in some form of additional education within one year of completing the program (1986 Follow-Up Report).

Regarding Coordination With Other Agencies

Recommendation Eight: The State Council on Vocational Technical Education recommends that the State Board of Vocational Technical Education and the State Board of Education continue efforts to improve coordination with other public and private agencies to enhance opportunities for targeted populations.

There should be continued efforts to improve coordination with other public and private agencies to enhance opportunities for targeted populations.

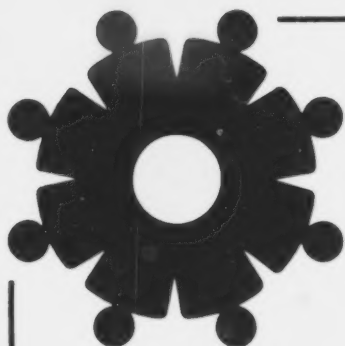
Specifically, changes in public policy should be pursued to allow for gradually diminished public financial support as vocational students from targeted populations enter the work force and rely more and more on their own earned incomes.

It becomes apparent that many students from targeted populations are benefiting from vocational technical education because of the support they receive from other agencies while receiving an education. Many students receive the federal Pell Grant and are involved in the work-study programs, both of which are available to all students in postsecondary education in Minnesota who meet eligibility requirements. In addition, however, many students are receiving public financial assistance to help provide for living expenses and child care costs while attending school. The Division of Rehabilitation Services of the Department of Jobs and Training also provides financial support for students with handicaps. A displaced farmer program which was administered through the Job Service of the Department of Jobs and Training provided financial and counseling support for one student. An OIC provided the support services for an incarcerated individual as she pursued vocational technical education. The Job Training Partnership Act provided financial support and counseling to a single parent who enrolled in a vocational program. One student received an Indian Scholarship which provided financial support during her education. The job site was part of the education of a secondary vocational student's program.

Establishing networks with other agencies appears to be an essential part of the total package of services members of targeted populations rely upon to become enrolled and be successful in vocational programs. Some students had difficulty, however, making the transition from public financial assistance to being self-supporting as they leave school and enter the job market. Some students would have benefited from a gradual decrease in public financial assistance as the income from employment increased. However, with the present social service eligibility guidelines, this is not an option for many graduating students.

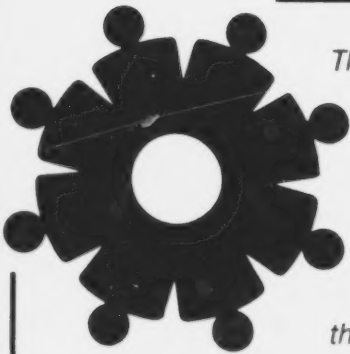
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The logo of the State Council on Vocational Technical Education is an abstract representation of the citizen-councilors assembled at a round table. Designed by a commercial art student at Alexandria Technical Institute, the design was selected in 1982 from 69 entries submitted by vocational students in Minnesota's high schools, secondary cooperative centers, and technical institutes. The Council made its selection on the basis of a recommendation by a panel of representatives from the graphic arts, public relations, and media industries in Minnesota.

Purpose of the Council

The State Council on Vocational Technical Education is designed to further public-private collaboration for the advancement of quality vocational programs responsive to labor market needs. Established in 1969 and designated as a state agency in 1985, the Council is composed of 13 members appointed by the Governor. Seven members represent the private sector interests of agriculture, business, industry, and labor. Six of the members represent vocational technical education institutions, career guidance and counseling organizations, special education, and targeted populations.

The Council advises the Governor, the State Board of Vocational Technical Education, the State Board of Education, the Governor's Job Training Council, the business community, the general public, and the U.S. Secretaries of Education and Labor. The Council advises on development of the annual state vocational plan; provides consultation on the establishment of program evaluation criteria and state technical committees; analyzes the spending distribution and the availability of vocational programs, services, and activities; reports on the extent to which equity to quality programs is provided targeted populations; recommends procedures to enhance public participation in vocational technical education; recommends improvements that emphasize business and labor concerns; evaluates the delivery systems assisted under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act and the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA); and advises on policies that the state should pursue to strengthen vocational technical education, as well as initiatives that the private sector could undertake to enhance program modernization.

To enhance effectiveness in gathering information, the Council holds at least one town meeting each year outside the Twin Cities metropolitan area at which the public is encouraged to express its concern about vocational technical education in Minnesota. To enhance its effectiveness in providing information, the Council publishes a quarterly newsletter, an annual directory, and a biennial report. These publications as well as project and activity reports are available to the public.

The Council meets on the first Tuesday following the second Monday of each even numbered month except during August. Information on the date, time, and location of meetings and other activities is available by calling the Council Offices at 612/296-4202.